

April 11, 2011

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-21-11

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY CHILD CARE COORDINATORS
ALL WELFARE-TO-WORK COORDINATORS
ALL CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
TO KIDS (CalWORKs) PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

SUBJECT: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE CALIFORNIA STATE
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM AND HEAD START TO SUPPORT
CalWORKs FAMILIES

REFERENCE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE) MANAGEMENT
BULLETINS 06-15 AND 09-04

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to promote the development of partnerships between county welfare departments (CWDs), Head Start grantees and delegates, and agencies administering the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) for all CalWORKs families. This offers the CWDs opportunities, alternatives, and additional options to promote collaboration and enrollment of eligible children and families connected to CWDs in high quality early education programs.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and CDE have collaborated at the state level and are encouraging local collaboration between these agencies to assist aided and formerly aided families with locating quality child development services, particularly when alternatives such as CalWORKs child care are not available because of the parents' welfare-to-work (WTW) status. CalWORKs families should be informed of the availability of Head Start and CSPP and encouraged to use these programs in combination with any CalWORKs child care services for which they may be eligible. The CDE will promote this partnership at their monthly meetings of child care stakeholders and contractors.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

Based on the 2010 *Dream Big For Our Youngest Children* final report to the Legislature from the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee, high-quality early learning and care programs with effective educators can improve children's readiness and school success, with higher test scores, better attendance, less grade repetition, and long-term benefits in school completion and lifetime earnings. The Head Start and CSPP are high-quality early childhood education programs that promote school readiness and enhance the social and cognitive development of young children. The programs also provide supportive services to address the needs of the families.

STATE PRESCHOOL

The CSPP was established in 2008 by Assembly Bill 2759 thereby consolidating the funding for State Preschool, Pre-kindergarten and Family Literacy, and General Child Care center-based programs serving eligible three-and four-year-old children. The program provides both part-day and full-day services which includes a core preschool curriculum that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for the children served. The program is currently serving 150,000 children from low income families and is administered through local education agencies, colleges, community-action agencies, and private nonprofit agencies. The part-day-part-year program only requires that the family be income eligible.

In order to be eligible for the full-day-full-year program, a family must meet both need and income eligibility criteria. Families can meet their need for subsidized child care services criteria by demonstrating that the hours of care requested corresponds to the time that is necessary for the parent to:

- work;
- attend vocational training;
- seek employment or permanent housing;
- comply with a Child Protective Services plan for the child or the plan of a licensed professional because the child is at risk of abuse or neglect; or
- receive respite care during the time the parent(s) is medically incapable of providing care and supervision.

Families can meet their income eligibility criteria for child care services when the family's income is equal or less than 70 percent of the state median income.

CDE [Management Bulletin 09-04](#) provides information on CSPP enrollment priorities for three-year old and four-year old children who are recipients of child protective services or who are at risk of being neglected or abused. The Management Bulletin further discusses and clarifies the differences in the enrollment and eligibility priority criteria between Head Start and State Preschool programs in matching children with programs that provide full-day services.

HEAD START

Head Start is a federally-funded, comprehensive child care program for very low income children and their families. Unlike many other forms of subsidized child care, families do not need to be working or engaged in other activities in order to be eligible for Head Start services. These programs can be administered through local education agencies, colleges, community-action agencies, and private nonprofit agencies. California's Head Start program is the largest in the nation; over 109,000 children were served in 2009. The primary target population of Head Start and Early Head Start are children under age five and pregnant women from families living below the federal poverty level. Head Start programs provide a comprehensive care model, including family services, education, nutrition, health and wellness, and mental health services for children and families in the program.

Discussions among the CWDs, California Head Start Agencies Association, CDSS, and CDE identified promising local partnerships between child welfare and CalWORKs programs, neighborhood Head Start, and CSPP, to link quality child care with CalWORKs families.

Some of the best practices initiated by the CWDs have included, but are not limited to:

- Developing partnerships with CWDs and their various programs (CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, and CalFresh), the local Head Start agency, and CSPP programs. This would include linking CWD eligibility workers (EWs), WTW and child care case managers to coordinate referrals. It would also include the EWs, WTW and child care staff that administer multiple welfare programs within counties' case management offices. These partnerships with Head Start and CSPP programs have the advantage of linking CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, and CalFresh families to high quality early childhood education and care programs.
- Developing training for eligibility workers (CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, and CalFresh), county employment and training staff or WTW staff, and social workers to inform and engage families about the benefits of quality Head Start and CSPP programs. These trainings empower staff to explain the importance of preschool education to parents and give information about the CSPP and Head Start program. Attached is information on preschool best practices and strategies from the Merced County Pilot Project.

Possible resources for promoting the use of these programs and supporting these partnerships include:

1. Identifying families who have age-eligible children who are in need of early education and Pre-Kindergarten programs like CSPP and Head Start, and make a referral to these programs. Additionally, a referral for service for birth to three-year-olds in Early Head Start, and Head Start center-based programs would be encouraged.
2. Developing mass mailers/flyers to be sent to CalWORKs families, along with the County Child Care form CCP 7, explaining the benefits of quality child care programs like Head Start and CSPP. Attached is an example of a flyer used by the Los Angeles County Office of Education Head Start.
3. Encouraging county employment and training staff or WTW staff to recommend preschool for families as part of their "Welfare-to-Work Plan" as appropriate.
4. Coordinate with local Head Start and Preschool contractors regarding Head Start and CSPP programs for CWD staff and the public, to present information on these programs and to explain the importance of preschool education to parents.
5. Collocating Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies in CWD's waiting rooms in order to educate parents/caretakers regarding options for subsidized quality child care.

For more information on the Head Start program and the California Head Start State Collaboration Office, along with some resources for building partnerships, visit the web site at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/chssco.asp> or e-mail Mr. Michael Zito at mzito@cde.ca.gov.

For a link to your county Head Start agency visit the web site at: <http://caheadstart.org/Roster.pdf> (Outside Source)

For information on the CSPP visit the web site at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fq/aa/cd/csppwebcast.asp>

For information on the R&R visit the web site at: <http://www.rnetwork.org/welcome/>

The children are enrolled in the Head Start and CSSP programs in either April or May; however, the enrollment period can vary. The programs generally operate ten months per year, from September to June. The CWDs are encouraged to collaborate with the Head Start and CSSP programs in time to allow CalWORKs-eligible children and families to take advantage of the enrollment period.

I encourage you to implement these practices and share information on your web sites to support your local partnership with Head Start and CSPP in your county. We are all concerned with the education and well-being of young children and believe these partnerships can assist families to access high quality early childhood educational care.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your assigned analyst in the Child Care Programs Bureau, at (916) 657-2144.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

STAN CAGLE, Chief
Child Care and Refugee Programs Branch

Attachments

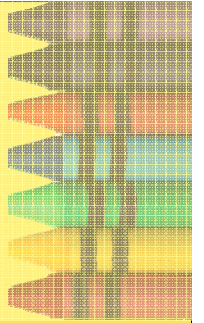


Merced County Pilot Project

Helping Parents Make the Choice for High Quality Preschool for their Child



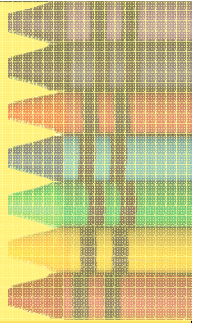
Pilot Project



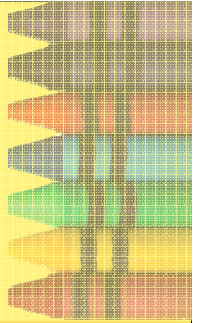
- Merced County has been selected to pilot a new approach
- Goal is to help families make an informed choice about having their child in preschool
- HSA, MCOE ACCESS and MCOE Head Start have become partners to pilot this effort

What is the reason for the project?

- The California Department of Education, Merced County Office of Education and Merced County Human Services Agency have a significant commitment to advocating for the greatest opportunities for children
- One piece of that is encouraging families to have their child attend preschool as a part of what they need to meet their child care needs

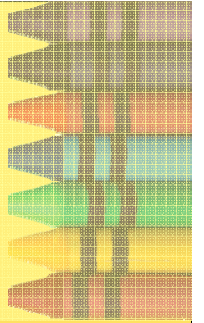


Partners in the Project



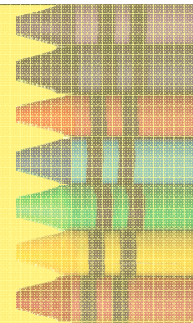
- HSA Family Services Representatives will “Plant the Seed” to get parents thinking about quality preschool and, if appropriate, make referrals to MCOE Head Start
- HSA Employment & Training Worker will talk with parents about the importance of preschool, integrate it into their Plans whenever appropriate and make referrals to Head Start
- ACCESS will reinforce message about importance of preschool when they meet with parents and encourage application to Head Start if they haven’t applied

The Benefits of Quality Preschool



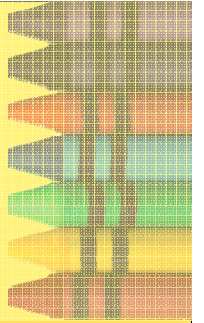
- Numerous studies link participation in preschool to higher educational attainment, less criminal behavior and overall educational achievement
- Preschool helps to bridge the gap in education prior to Kindergarten
- \$7–\$17 Return on every dollar spent on quality preschool

Preschool for At-risk Families in Merced County



- Merced County already faces many challenges
- Only 28% of children in Merced County attend Preschool, which ranks Merced as 57th out of 58 counties in California
(source: Children Now 2007)
- A gap has developed in all skill areas that lasts a lifetime

Talking Points for Families About Preschool



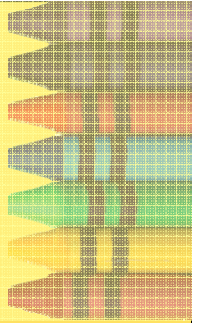
- Preschool has stable hours and helps families build routines
- Preschool can boost a child's self-confidence and offer opportunities for social interaction
- Preschool can teach a child about structure, rules and listening
- Preschool can teach a child age-appropriate basic skills related to reading and math that lasts a lifetime

Talking Points (cont.)



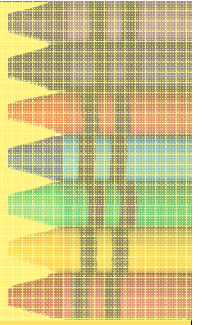
- Preschool offers nutritious meals and information about a healthier lifestyle for the whole family
- Preschools are located in almost every community
- Preschool is a wonderful way to help a child succeed in Kindergarten and later in life

How Can Preschool Work With Other Child Care?



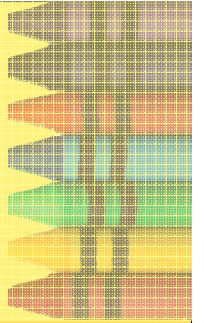
- Preschool is generally a 3–3½ hour day, either first thing in the morning or after the lunch hour
- Parents can drop off/pick up child at preschool, as long as they have child care that can provide the other transportation
- Caregiver may still receive full day reimbursement if the total need is 10 hours or more

Preschool Sites / Options



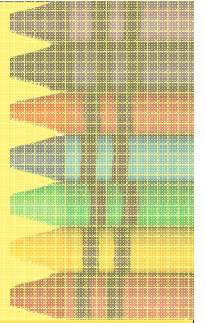
- Head Start sites are located in 15 communities
 - Children must be 3 or 4 by 12/2 of the given year
 - Family must be income eligible, receiving cash aid or have some other eligibility factor
 - ✓ Example: A family of four can earn no more than \$22,050 annually
 - Immigration status not considered
 - Children at all developmental levels are welcomed
 - Families receive preschool and comprehensive services

The Role of HSA Employment and Training Staff



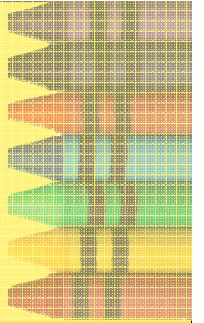
- Speak with the family about the importance of preschool
- If the family is interested in Head Start, complete and submit the appropriate referral form
 - Handouts:
 - ✓ Handout: Head Start At A Glance
 - ✓ HSA/ACCESS General Referral for EHS/HS Services
- Include Head Start enrollment into the appropriate E&T Plan
- Head Start staff will initiate contact with the family to complete an application within one week

Partner Activity



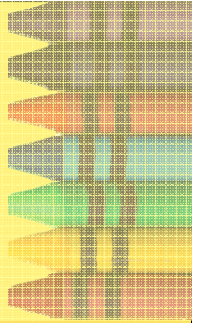
- Speak to each other about a family you've worked with in the recent past that had a preschool-aged child
- Provide reasons that preschool is advantageous
- Share information on locations and things to look for
- Let them know how to apply or complete a referral form

Open Discussion



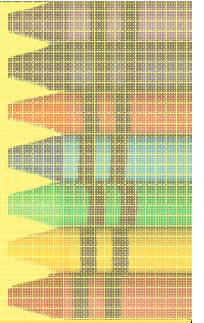
- Questions about preschool services and availability
- Questions about your role
- Discussion on positives and potential barriers for families to attend preschool

Next Steps



- Please begin talking with families about their preschool options
- In about 6 months, a focused discussion will be held about what has worked in your discussions with parents and what the barriers have been

Thank you!



"Education is the great engine to personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that the child of a farm worker can become the president of a great nation."

– Nelson Mandela –



ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN...

HEAD START

Give your child a head start in learning and growing. This free preschool program includes meals for children ages 3 and 4 years old. Head Start meets the needs of special populations, including children with disabilities.

Head Start is an equal opportunity program operating on a nondiscriminatory basis, affording equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, color, sex, religion, ethnicity or disability.

ENROLL NOW!

For information on where to enroll your child in Head Start, call the number below for your area:

Compton	(562) 206-7270
USC/Exposition Area	(213) 743-4650
Northeast L.A./San Gabriel Valley/Covina Valley	(626) 459-4299
Long Beach	(562) 427-0833
Pasadena (ages 3-4)	(626) 585-6500
The rest of L.A. County (ages 0-4)	(877) Pre k kid
	(877) 773-5543
San Fernando Valley	(818) 717-1000
	(818) 897-4124